

management program and the subsequent near elimination of the local wood products industry. The log home manufacturing industry remains strong in the Bitterroot valley. The following table illustrates the trend in timber volume sold by the Bitterroot National Forest from 1961 through 2005¹.

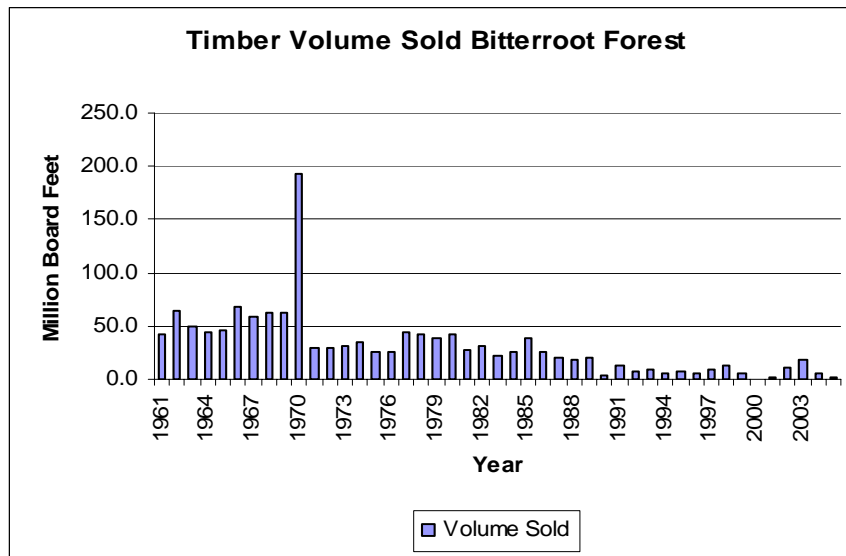


Figure 2: Timber Volume Sold on the Bitterroot National Forest.

Laws, regulation, and policy for the protection of the environment, increasing foreign imports, and declining timber management budgets also contributed to the decline of the forest products program. The program reached a low point in 2000 and has increased slightly since then due to products salvaged following the 2000 fire season. That fire event burned about 40 percent of the land base classified as “suitable for timber production.”

The Bitterroot National Forest has always been a place where local residents and Tribes could harvest non-timber forest products, such as firewood, berries, or mushrooms. These uses of the Forest provide an important connection between people and their forest.

Forest-Wide Desired Conditions

- a. Land classified as “suitable for timber production” would have a regularly scheduled timber harvest program that provides benefits to people while achieving ecosystem health and sustainability.

¹ The large amount of timber volume sold in 1970 is a reflection of a strong market and the sale of several years’ worth of previously unsold timber sale offerings.